

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING**

March 25, 2008

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on March 25, 2008 pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center Boardroom, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members present were Chairman Dale Venturini, Commissioners, Jeff Hirsh, Jason Fowler and Paul MacDonald.

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill, Betty Sullivan and Kerrie Bennett, RICCA; Ryan DeCarvalo, RI Hospitality & Tourism; Martha Sheridan and Neil Schriever, PWCVB; Tim Muldoon and John McGinn, RICC; Larry Lepore, Cheryl Schadone, Kym Chevian and Eleanor SanAntonio, Dunkin' Donuts Center; Dave DePetrillo, RIEDC; Evan Smith, Newport CVB; Jessica Cigna and Amy Mendella, Senate Fiscal Office and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.

Ms. Venturini called the meeting to order at 12:35 pm.

Ms. Venturini asked for approval of the minutes of the February meeting. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Fowler and seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the minutes of the February meeting.

Ms. Venturini introduced Ryan Carvarlo, the newest member of her team at RI Hospitality & Tourism. Discussions ensued regarding food safety. Ms. Venturini noted that the Health Department requires a Food Safety Plan. She stated that RI Hospitality & Tourism is helping restaurants to prepare their plan. Ms. Venturini said that an aggressive training program is underway with the goal of making Rhode Island the safest State in the Country when it comes to food safety.

PROVIDENCE/WARWICK CVB

Mr. Schriever began his presentation by reporting on sales activity for the month of February. Mr. Schriever stated that Fidelity Investments had signed a contract with the complex for an event in December 2008. He noted that other bookings include the RI Amateur Hockey Association, NeighborWorks America and the American Risk and Insurance Association. Mr. Schriever was enthusiastic about the National Senior Games for September of 2008 through 2010. He noted that the games would take place all over the State. Mr. Schriever reported that a tentative booking of the United Transportation Union's August 2009 meeting was a result of the Valentines Day phone blitz. Mr. Schriever also noted that Experient had selected Providence to host their Vice President's meeting. He

stated that this is a great opportunity for us to showcase Providence. Mr. Schriever stated that Providence has made the short list for CESSE. Ms. Sheridan reported that several meeting planners from National Figure Skating had toured the City and the facilities. Ms. Sheridan stated that the CVB is excited about the package that was presented. She said that Mr. Lepore had given a great tour of the Dunk and that this opportunity would not have happened without a renovated Dunkin' Donuts Center. Ms. Sheridan thanked Mr. McCarvill and Mr. Lepore for their help. Mr. Schriever reported that the Destination Planning Guide, the Providence Visitor Guide and other collateral material are in production. Mr. Fowler asked if there was a TV commercial to advertise our State. He noted that the State is beautiful and perhaps businesses would sponsor some advertising. Mr. DePetrillo noted that the State does have video and will include it in next month's RIEDC report.

DUNKIN' DONUTS CENTER

Ms. Venturini asked Ms. Schadone to address the Committee. Ms. Schadone invited the Committee members to walk with the elephants on April 28th when the Circus arrives. Ms. Schadone reported that the Station Fire Memorial Concert was broadcast on VH1. She stated that they had created one hour special which reportedly raised \$50,000 for the victims' fund. Ms. Schadone stated that the presentation for this month's meeting would concentrate on today's evolving media environment and the new way we communicate our

message. Ms. Schadone stated that the internet and increased television viewing has had an enormous impact on the way consumers are made aware of events. Ms. Schadone noted that newspaper readership has dropped to 26 minutes per day. Ms. Schadone stated that although television viewing has increased 8% in the past 5 years the introduction of DVRs and remote control skipping capabilities advertisers must look for ways to stand out beyond commercial advertising. Ms. Schadone noted that the internet continues its strong growth. She said that the medium continues to outpace advertising spending. Ms. Venturini asked when the complex's web site would be updated. Mr. McGinn stated that the Convention Center is being worked on now and Ms. Schadone said that the Dunkin' Donuts Center had not yet updated their site. Ms. Bennett commented that the Convention Center site is outdated. Mr. Lepore noted that the Dunkin' Donuts site received high marks from SMG. Ms. Venturini stated that our web site should be sexy and edgy and we need to get it done. A group was formed which includes Ms. Schadone, Mr. McGinn, Ms. Bennett and Mr. Schriever to work on a web site for the complex. Ms. SanAntonio suggested that the patrons have the ability to view their seats or a virtual tour of the facilities and the sites should be be user friendly.

CONVENTION CENTER

John McGinn reported several tentative events for the Convention Center. He said that a repeat Stop & Shop meeting is tentatively

scheduled for June and the Hasbro International Fall Sales Meeting that was held in house in the past is interested in booking events in 2009 and 2010. Mr. McGinn noted that the event was a direct result of the Leap Day Phone Blitz and in collaboration with the CVB and the Westin. Other tentative events include the American Phytopathological Society Annual Meeting and the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers because of the relationship with Ocean Tech Expo. Mr. McGinn reported that the Convention Center will host the Cambridge Health Tech Institute Fall Meeting in September, 2008. Mr. McGinn reported that representative from the National Senior Games toured our facilities and the area. Mr. McGinn stated that the games would take place throughout Rhode Island. Mr. McGinn announced that a PBS Reality Series, Every Day Edison's, focuses on the process of making an idea a patented product would be holding casting calls. He said that the Convention Center and the Dunkin' Donuts Center collaborated to help bring this event to the Convention Center. Mr. McGinn noted that as a result of a previous Pfizer Vendor Day two new Pfizer events have been secured for this fiscal year. Mr. Lepore reported that a new event could be a very good joint booking for the complex. Rock the Ink is a tattoo expo that would occupy the Convention Center and have related concerts at the Dunk. Mr. Lepore also reported on the Spirit of America tour. He stated that the free four day event would include military reenactments and precision drill demonstrations, etc.

RHODE ISLAND TOURISM DIVISION UPDATE

RICCA MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING (MARCH 25, 2008)

DAVID C. DEPETRILLO

DOMESTIC GROUP/PACKAGE MARKETING PROGRAM

Rhode Island continues to be in the forefront of the culinary tourism trend. Last month Katrina White of the tourism division spoke at the Massachusetts Governor's Conference on the culinary tourism. She is also the New England champion for the International Culinary Tourism Association and is helping to organize their next annual symposium, which will be held next month in New Haven. Ms. White is also coordinating an event for key tour operators. We will have fifteen domestic tour operators participating in a culinary adventure tour of New England. They'll be in Rhode Island on April 1st and 2nd, just prior to the National Tour Association Spring Meet. On their tour they will visit Federal Hill, tour the Johnson & Wales Culinary Arts Museum, tour the Newport vineyard with a tasting, visit the Marble House including a kitchen tour, and have an elegant Rhode Island dinner served at the Elms mansion. They will also visit Kenyon's grist mill.

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING

Our annual discover New England International Tourism Summit is approaching and we are very pleased that we will have a record thirty delegates from Rhode Island participating. Approximately half the

delegates will from hotel and the rest from attractions and destination marketing organizations. The summit will have 44 international tour operators representing seven countries and five foreign travel journalists who will be meeting one-on-one with hotels, inns, attractions, CVB's, etc.

SPECIAL EVENTS

We held our Spring/Summer tourism season kickoff event on March 11th at the Culinary Arts Museum. We had a standing room only turnout and good press coverage. We utilized a culinary theme for the event, focusing on the State's distinctive foods, food festivals, great dining, cooking classes and culinary tours. Each of the tourism regions offered local desserts following the program. We had very good media coverage.

PUBLICATIONS

At our Spring/Summer kickoff the Governor unveiled our 154 page 2008 Official Rhode Island Travel Guide, supported entirely by the private sector with advertising revenue. The guide is also available for viewing on our website.

INDUSTRY EDUCATION

This Thursday the Tourism Division and preserve Rhode Island are

hosting a tourism 101 workshop for small museums and historic sites. These organizations have great potential, but frequently lack the marketing skills and understanding of the industry and are unable to adequately benefit from it. We hope to change that with a series of workshops.

Ms. Venturini reported that a green award ceremony would be held at the Convention Center on Earth Day, April 22nd. She noted that Kathy Masino has planned a green menu (organic). Ms. Bennett informed the Committee that the banners are up in front of the Convention Center.

Mr. McCarvill reported that there has been some discussion and research regarding the naming rights for the Convention Center. Mr. McCarvill stated that we will look at everything but Convention Centers are not hot properties for naming rights deals. He said that the proposed bill as its language stands now will not work but further discussion is possible. Discussions ensued with people voicing their concerns and opinions with naming the facility. Mr. McCarvill noted that there is potential to sell space within the building.

Ms. Venturini thanked everyone for attending. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Hirsh and seconded by Mr. Fowler it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 2:00 pm